

Published and Copyright (c) 1999 - 2001
All Rights Reserved

Atari Online News, Etc.
A-ONE Online Magazine
Dana P. Jacobson, Publisher/Managing Editor
Joseph Mirando, Managing Editor
Rob Mahlert, Associate Editor

Atari Online News, Etc. Staff

Dana P. Jacobson -- Editor
Joe Mirando -- "People Are Talking"
Michael Burkley -- "Unabashed Atariophile"
Albert Dayes -- CC: Classic Chips
Rob Mahlert -- Web site

With Contributions by:

To subscribe to A-ONE, send a message to: dpj@atarinews.org
and your address will be added to the distribution list.
To unsubscribe from A-ONE, send the following: Unsubscribe A-ONE
Please make sure that you include the same address that you used to
subscribe from.

To download A-ONE, set your browser bookmarks to one of the
following sites:

<http://people.delphi.com/dpj/a-one.htm>
<http://www.icwhen.com/aone/>
<http://almag.atari.org>
Now available:
<http://www.atarinews.org>

Visit the Atari Advantage Forum on Delphi!
<http://forums.delphi.com/m/main.asp?sigdir=atari>

=~==~==

A-ONE #0306

02/09/00

~ Spam Wars Heat Up! ~ People Are Talking! ~ Netscape 6.01
~ Juno To Go Orwellian! ~ "Freebies" Get Rare! ~ Shrek Xbox!
~ Xbox Name Could Cost! ~ ATV Offroad Fury! ~ Sony Clashes!
~ Microsoft "Experience" ~ Sega: Boon and Threat! ~ NHL Faceoff 2001!

-* Microsoft Drops MSN Rebate! *-
-* Web Tax Moratorium Bills Proposed! *-
-* Appeals Court To Rule On Napster On Monday *-

=~==~==

->From the Editor's Keyboard
"~~~~~"

"Saying it like it is!"

This has not been a good week, period! Snow storm in the beginning of the week, snowing again now. Work has been anything but boring - the natives are restless. And to top it all off, personal family crises have added to the stress levels. So....am I in a mood to take off on an editorial binge? You bet'cha!

As you'll read later in this week's issue, Juno is considering a proposal to increase their revenue stream by having the users of their free services enter into an agreement allowing Juno to access users' computers to perform proposed tasks, such as computations and the like, when the user's machine is not being utilized. As you've read in these pages in the past, many of our readers here have signed up for the SETI program in which you run a program on your computer analyzing data in the search for extra-terrestrial life. It's a voluntary program, with no strings attached. As it appears from what I've learned about Juno's proposals, there are strings.

Granted, there are certainly two sides to this issue. One might say that nothing these days is free. Juno started out with free internet and e-mail access but the caveat was the end-user would use proprietary software "forcing" the user to have banner ads appear while running Juno's software. Well, we all know that online advertising is not generating enough revenues for businesses to stay afloat, so they're coming up with "innovative" ideas to supplement those revenues. Juno's idea is just one of them. You want "free" access, Juno wants to "rent" your computer to companies to perform certain tasks in exchange for their services. Fair? Perhaps to some.

Others will view this proposal as an invasion of privacy. Juno will have access to your computer. Assuredly, they will state that the only purpose will be to perform these tasks, but what are the possibilities here? I've read George Orwell's '1984' and Big Brother is more than a mere possibility. It's scary, in fact.

I happen to be a user of Juno's free e-mail services, as a back-up to my primary e-mail accounts. I don't use it often, but it's nice to know that it's available to me when I need it. Do I think it's fair that in order to use Juno, I'm deluged with banner ads? Sure, it's okay. I've learned to ignore them. If required to give up computer processing time when I'm not using my PC to keep my Juno account, will I? No way. I think what Juno will be proposing is intrusive. I also believe that Juno will attempt to implement this policy without being totally forthcoming to its users. People are going to agree to a future Juno program update without realizing what they're getting into when they click on that "I Agree" button when installing the new program update.

Where do you stand on this issue? Would you trade your downtime PC time for free e-mail and internet access? I'd really like to know. I also wonder how many people out there use Juno as their primary e-mail source, or their only source. As an aside, Juno has also made it known that paying customers will not be affected by this proposal, at least initially. Is this a scheme

to get people to subscribe to a service that they've been getting for free? I know that I won't be associated with such tactics, if true. Had Juno come out and said they no longer could provide free service, and needed to start charging a nominal fee - it would be fair. Would I agree to pay? No, I already have enough accounts that I'm paying for. A paid back-up account isn't necessary for me personally. It might be for some. Let us know how you feel about this issue? Am I being totally paranoid, or do you smell something rotten?

Until next time...

=~==~==

PEOPLE ARE TALKING
compiled by Joe Mirando
jmirando@portone.com

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. I've got an interesting (and fairly short) story for you this week.

As you may know, I've got an Intel-based laptop that I run Linux on instead of Windows. I like Linux a lot because it's a bit faster than Windows, and it gives me a lot of control over a lot of things.

The one thing that is more difficult at times is configuration. So it was with some minor amount of concern that I decided to upgrade to a broadband internet connection.

An hour or so of cruising the internet sites of broadband providers (The cable company for @home service, and the phone company for DSL service) showed a few differences... which I'm sure you've seen in their respective commercials.

My major concern was the interface card. Both cable and DSL rely on an ethernet card. Linux is kind of funny about some network cards to begin with, and needing a PCMCIA, or PC card, only makes the situation worse.

I can, of course, revert to Windows if I want/need to, but I'd really rather not. Know what I mean?

Well, I decided to go with the DSL connection. I ordered the equipment and waited for it to arrive.

It came about two weeks later. I opened up the box and looked in horror at the network card they provided. By this time, I had memorized the long list of network cards that were certified to work with the 'flavor' of Linux that I use. The supplied card was not among them. So I gave in and installed the network card and DSL modem under Windows first.

The installation went on fairly smoothly until the installer asked for my Windows CD. I do have the required disk, but for some reason the installer could not find the required networking files on it. It took me three tries to get everything installed, and it turned out that the

required files were already in the Windows system directory on my hard drive. Go figure. After that, the installation went smoothly and the DSL connection came up just as it should have.

Then I tried to install the network card and DSL modem under Linux. To my great surprise and joy, the installation went smoothly and with only minimal input from me. The DSL connection came up as expected and runs like a champ. In fact, it took me less time to install it under Linux than it did under Windows. Now I've got a fast internet connection AND my OS of choice (my choice on the Intel laptop, that is). Life is good.

Of course, my main goal is to finally get an ethernet card for my TT and to be able to access the DSL connection over a network. Imagine an accelerated TT with a graphics card running CAB and surfing the net at about 1300+ Kbps! Well, that's for another day, I guess.

Now let's get on with the news and STuff from the UseNet.

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup
=====

Didier Mequignon posts this update about Aniplayer:

"There are a little release on my site (V2.14a):

- Polish translation for V2.14.
- Fixed bug with AV_SENDKEY message (thanks to Claude Labelle, the author of CD-Writer).
- MP3 DSP more fast (with DMA transfers):
The average DSP load is 64% for an MP3 44,1 KHz joint-stereo file and a DSP at 50MHz, so it's just the limit for listen this files in stereo with a DSP at 32 MHz (a CT60 for example if you not put another oscillator for the DSP).
- The 'Quality' option now is used with MP3:
 - * With the CPU, when this option is checked the quality is better, but decompression is more slow (some %).
 - * With the DSP, when this option is checked the quality is equal to V2.13 (more slow), and when this option is unchecked the quality is better than V2.14 (more fast) and lower than V2.13.

Aniplayer download: <http://aniplay.atari.org> "

Lonny Pursell jumps in and posts his experiences with Aniplayer:

"On my Hades060 Aniplayer uses about 75% cpu load on a typical mp3 at 128 bps. I'm using Ozk's GSXB drivers and a SoundBlaster PCI128 card which only set me back about \$25 bucks."

Clement Benrabah asks about MiNT on his Milan:

"I'm trying to use the Milan 1.15.5 Mint's kernel and i don't succeed in. My Milan doesn't go on booting after the reading of the mint.cnf.

I removed the programs that might make troubles and i've only kept the drivers without success. The mintnp.prg (special Milan version) is the last program in the AUTO folder.

Neither Naes 1.2, nor a shell are being launched after the reading

of mint.cnf and my Milan always stops at this moment.

I'm still using the 1.15.1 kernel.

Could someone help me ?"

Jorgen Nyberg tells Clement:

"This is probably a problem with you using an old FNRAMFS. You MUST use version 0.70 or better. I made the same mistake the first time I tried it."

Carey Christenson asks about hard drive partition sizes:

"Does anyone know the maximum size for a hard drive partition on a 1040STf with 2.5 megs of Ram and TOS 1.04? I have heard anything from 20megs to 1GB. What is the answer?"

Peter West tells Carey:

"According to *the* expert, Dr Uwe of HDDRIVER, the limit is 512 MB per partition in your case."

Dr. Uwe Seimet jumps in and lays down the law:

"The maximum partition size for TOS 1.04 is 256 MByte. Anything else is definitely wrong. This also applies to the size of the boot partition, which is not restricted to be smaller than other partitions."

Greg Goodwin adds:

"Although Uwe posted earlier, it might be useful to review:

TOS 1 -- 256MB per partition
TOS 3 -- 512MB per partition
TOS 4 -- 1 GB per partition

I'm not certain about TOS 2."

Uwe replies:

"[TOS 2] is the same as with TOS 3.0x."

Dennis Vermeire posts this about TOS emulation:

"If you want to see "fast" emulation then the PC is not the way to follow, a MAC PPC running MagiC-Mac is the ultimate in speed and compatibility... add NVDI, Jinnee and Scriptor to this combination and even die-hard Mac users will be amazed..."

Mike Freeman asks Dennis:

"Does the demo version of MagicMac have some kind of slowdown routine on it as a demo limitation? I know the PC version at least at one time did. When I tried the demo on my 350MHz G3 iMac, benchmark programs said it was running on average about 7x the speed of an ST, and software didn't seem to run all that fast. This isn't a whole heck of a lot faster than my Nemesized Falcon.

Hopefully it would be better in the full version? If this is the case,

it's too bad they did this. I'd like to see just how much of a speed increase I'd get before I consider spending my money, or wasting my money, depending on the outcome. At any rate, my Falcon won't be replaced by it until it's dead beyond repair and there are no more Falcons out there to buy."

Dennis, always johnny-on-the-spot, tells Mike:

"Well, let the figures speak:

GEM Dialog Box:	0.335	2000%
VDI Text:	0.145	5137%
VDI Text Effects:	0.430	3406%
VDI Small Text:	0.075	8266%
VDI Graphics:	0.995	1678%
GEM Window:	0.490	765%
Integer Division:	0.095	3278%
Float Math:	0.000	----
RAM Access:	0.010	32200%
ROM Access:	0.010	22500%
Blitting:	3.080	282%
VDI Scroll:	0.275	5454%
Justified Text:	1.325	716%
VDI Enquire:	0.010	20500%
New Dialogs:	0.600	1425%
=====		
Graphics:		4511%
CPU:		19326%
Average:		7686%

MagiCMac 6.10.1 running on a G4/400Mhz with OS9 in 1280*1024*16.7 million colours.

Reference is a standard Falcon running in 640*400*256

On average this monster is 195 times faster then a Falcon, 775 times faster then a 1040ST, 95 times faster then a TT and 11 times faster then a Hades060.

In real time figures this translates to Imagecopy displaying GIF in real time, 2.5Mb TIFF in 0.5 secs, and heavy packed JPEG's in a second. Loading and displaying an average Calamus document takes simply a mouseclick, and even CAB is now a fast browser...

No Falcons? Of course not, but then you've got a nice G3/350 stacked away, MagiCMac isn't a Falcon emulator so it will not run any of the Falcon specific apps, but don't forget that in addition to fast emulation you get speedy graphics, heaps of RAM and very fast hard disk and CD-R transfer speeds thrown in as well.

Compared to a PC running an Atari emulator this is a Formula one car..."

Tim Pattison asks about upgrading the RAM in his STE:

"I want to upgrade my STE from 520k to 4 mb and I have access to some 1mb simms from an old PC but need advice as to whether the simms need to be parity or non-parity and whether they should be of a particular speed.

I have 7 1mb simms in total but they are not all the same.

There are 4 identical ones which contain three chips on each simm (I presume this means they have parity) and the speed would appear to be 70ns.

One has 9 chips (parity?) and would appear to be 60 ns

One has 9 chips and would appear to be 80 ns

The other has 9 chips and would appear to be 100ns

Are any of these suitable for an STE?"

Atari guru Bob Retelle tells Tim:

"Just about ANY 30 pin, 1 Mb SIMM will work for the STe.

Parity doesn't matter- The STe doesn't use parity, if the SIMM has the extra parity bit, the STe will just ignore it.

Speed also doesn't matter. any of those SIMMs listed are far faster than the STe needs ('150ns is the spec for an ST), so any of them will work.

It's NOT however, a good idea to mix types, styles and speeds.

I would go with the set of 4 identical types."

Well folks, that's it for this week. Tune in next week, same time, same station, and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

$$= \sim = \sim = \sim =$$
[illegible]
$$= \sim = \sim = \sim =$$

->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News - The Latest Gaming News!
 ~~~~~

## Sony Clashes with Independent Game Developers

Sony Corp.'s troubled launch of its flagship game console PlayStation 2 has

strained relations with some key allies -- the software publishers that once helped it claim top spot in a \$20 billion-a-year market.

Analysts say that while Sony will be a leading contender in the market for the new generation of consoles, its stickier relations with some U.S. game developers have cast some doubt on its market dominance and could open the door for rivals.

"In development ease and lead time, Sony has been more difficult to work with this time around than for the original PlayStation launch," Wedbush Morgan analyst Miguel Iribarren said.

Part of the reason the Japanese electronics giant was able to break into a market dominated by Nintendo Co. Ltd. and Sega Corp. when it launched the hugely popular PlayStation in 1995, was because it lured third-party game developers to produce top games for an unproven platform.

Yet now that the PlayStation is the world's most popular console, some game developers say Sony has neglected them.

Sony Computer Entertainment America spokeswoman Molly Smith said that the record number of titles ready at the launch of PlayStation 2 was a testament to its developer support. She said shipment delays for the console were regrettable, but added that the production problems had been fixed.

"It's clear that companies that have invested a lot of money in development understand that our business model is long term," Smith said.

Sony launched PlayStation 2 in the United States in October, but is seen facing stiff competition later in the year from Nintendo's GameCube and handheld Game Boy Advance, plus Microsoft Corp.'s market entry with the Xbox.

Game developers have been frustrated with Sony's shipping delays, which left many gamers empty-handed in the Christmas shopping season and left Sony with a 1 million worldwide unit shortfall for its fiscal year ending in March.

They also accuse Sony of not making game development kits more widely available or early enough to designers. "It's opened the door a little bit for Microsoft," Iribarren said.

Microsoft, meanwhile, has been copying Sony's prior path to success -- actively courting game developers.

All of the major video game makers have agreed to produce for the Xbox, which developers say are an easier platform to make games for than the PlayStation series because Microsoft's console is similar in design to a PC.

Xbox's most significant conquest was No. 1 third-party developer Electronic Arts, Inc., which has had close ties to Sony and has focused most of its resources on making games for the original PlayStation and its successor.

Yet Electronic Arts very publicly said it would provide up to 10 games in the first 6 months of Xbox's launch. That roll-out compares with the 10 games it pledged to make ready for PlayStation 2 in the first 4 months of its U.S. release.



Some analysts interpreted Electronic Arts' decision to publicize its support of the Xbox, in the thick of the key Christmas shopping season, as a snub to Sony.

Meanwhile, Sony has laid some blame for its \$120 million game division loss in its most recent quarter on video game publishers, saying they did provide enough titles for its PlayStation 2. Most profits from Sony's gaming unit come from software royalties.

Electronic Arts President John Riccitiello criticized Sony in a recent interview for not doing enough to support the PlayStation 2 with strong games of its own, calling Sony's driving game Ridge Racer "relatively mediocre."

"There weren't enough software titles to create a market," he told Reuters.

Those slower PlayStation 2 sales have hurt profits for game developers who have staked a lot on Sony's success.

Justin Post of Deutsche Banc Alex Brown said the short-term impact of the smaller-than-expected PlayStation 2 sales could hurt Electronic Arts most as the market leader.

"If you look at the million unit shortfall and go with the average 2-1/2 units of software for each console, that's 2.5 million units of software, and EA has a big share," he said, predicting the company's lost revenue could total \$20 million to \$30 million for its fiscal year ending in March.

Similarly, game developer THQ Inc. delayed launching its PlayStation 2 game Red Faction, citing uncertain shipments of the console in the current quarter.

Sony also miffed smaller video game developers like THQ, which has traditionally vied for the No. 2 and No. 3 independent game publisher spot with Activision Inc.

"It's fairly widely known EA got the development kits earlier," THQ President and Chief Executive Brian Farrell told Reuters. "If they'd have gotten all of us the kits, we would have had better titles earlier."

Meanwhile Activision's Chair and Chief Executive Bobby Kotick voiced no complaints, and said his company's relationship with Sony had improved since the original PlayStation launch.

"We've had a great relationship with Sony," he said.

#### Game Developers See Sega As Both Boon And Threat

Sega Corp.'s long-anticipated decision to throw its hat in the ring as a full-time game developer sets the Japanese company up for a battle with confident and entrenched U.S. competitors.

But analysts warn that Sega, the newcomer in this corner of a \$20-billion industry, could prove a tough opponent.

Sega last week said it would cease production of its Dreamcast video game

console, and shift energies to make games for other platforms that were previously only available for the Sega system.

That puts Sega on the turf of independent video game publishers -- such as Electronic Arts, Inc., THQ Inc. and Activision, Inc. -- which make software for the top gaming systems.

Game makers benefit from Sega's decision to exit the market because they have one less platform to develop for, which lowers their costs and lets them concentrate on better-selling systems, analysts said.

'If there's fewer consoles and less uncertainty I think it makes it easier for all," Justin Post, analyst with Deutsche Banc Alex. Brown, said.

But adding one more experienced gamemaker to the fray could eat into market shares, and analysts note that industry leader Electronic Arts could be the most vulnerable.

'Sega has excellent studios and is particularly good at sports games which haven't in the past competed with Electronic Arts," said Wedbush Morgan analyst Miguel Iribarren. 'EA hasn't really had competition like what Sega could put up against them."

EA's traditional strengths have been with products for hard-core sports enthusiasts, with titles such as 'Madden NFL," "NBA Live" and 'Tiger Woods PGA Tour." Sega is known for mass-market sports games such as 'NBA Action," snowboarding "Rippin' Riders" and racing 'Sega Rally."

While Post agreed that Sega will provide some competition for the sports genre that Electronic Arts has traditionally dominated, he said the two companies have different audiences.

'No doubt on the margin it will mean more competition for EA," he said. 'But it won't be as head to head as some people think."

Sega's games will take on the sports strengths of market leader Electronic Arts, which some analysts credit with hammering the deciding nail in Dreamcast's coffin after EA made the controversial move last year to not develop games for Sega's Dreamcast console.

Electronic Arts John Riccitiello was confident about his company's competitive advantage over Sega.

'They're starting from scratch," he said in a recent interview, noting that Sega had no experience making games for other consoles and would have to wait out the industry's typical 12- to 18-month software development lags before it would become a serious rival.

Sales of Sega's Dreamcast game console have never been impressive, despite the fact that the platform was the first in a wave of super-charged, DVD-playing, Internet-ready hardware expected to dominate the industry in coming years.

Despite its lower price, the Dreamcast was eclipsed by the roll-out of Sony's PlayStation 2 and the upcoming introductions of Microsoft Corp.'s Xbox and Nintendo Inc.'s new GameCube and Game Boy Advance.

Sega's decision to produce video game software for these new consoles means it must buy licenses and develop relationships for its old rivals.

'Sega, Nintendo and Sony have all been archrivals, so it won't be easy culturally for Nintendo and Sony to embrace them and say they want them (Sega) to be licensees," said Activision Chief Executive Bobby Kotick.

He acknowledged Sega's history of software strengths, but said its management would likely be distracted by issues related to terminating its console business.

Kotick and THQ Chief Executive Brian Farrell agreed that they did not see Sega's entry into the video game publishing market as a daunting, direct threat.

But how many independent video game developers can the market support?

Deutsche Banc Alex. Brown's Post estimates that probably four to five game publishers can sustain long-term profits.

The estimated \$20-billion-a-year industry is seen growing rapidly, with the speed depending on adoption rates of the new consoles and high-speed Internet access.

Currently Electronic Arts is the top independent game publisher by far, followed by THQ and Activision. THQ is second in terms of market capitalization yet Activision is second in terms of revenue for the first 9 months of the fiscal year.

Smaller players have been trying to carve out a greater market share in the industry. These include Interplay, which just snagged the license for the popular Matrix movie title. Infogrames Inc., U.S. unit of the French video game maker has been aggressively buying small publishers.

Sega is also looking to enter markets that the established independent developers have largely ignored. Last week it said it would develop games for Palm Inc.'s handheld computers by the end of the year.

Electronic Arts, for one, has said it will focus on developing games for consoles and its EA.com Web site, rather than mobile computing devices.

#### Xbox Name May Cost Microsoft

Xbox Technologies is a modest software operation by any measure--it had revenue of \$879,158 during its last fiscal year.

But that number could swell considerably in 2001, if Microsoft's track record for settling trademark disputes is any indication. The tiny software company in Coconut Grove, Fla., is "in discussions" with Microsoft over the name of Microsoft's new videogame console. That's a polite way of saying that Microsoft is probably going to end up writing some big checks so that it can use the product name without restrictions.

Xbox Technologies is a holding company that sells electronic learning software and other applications. It filed the first application for the Xbox name with the U.S. patent office in March 1999, seven months before Microsoft did. It also trades as an over-the-counter issue under the symbol "XBOX."

Microsoft is pouring \$500 million into marketing for the new videogame

console, which it had code-named Xbox before announcing in March 2000 that the official brand name would be the same. The Redmond, Wash. software giant has rejected an offer by Xbox Technologies to buy out the name, according to Xbox Tech CEO John Van Leeuwen. A much likelier resolution, given the fact that the Florida company staked its claim first, is that Microsoft will pay it a flat fee or strike some kind of licensing deal so that it can freely use the name.

The two companies could also decide on an agreement to limit the use of the name to certain products. That would be tricky, since Xbox Tech sells e-learning software and Microsoft could well be planning educational games that would run on the Xbox.

''It's not like we're in the shampoo business," says Van Leeuwen. ''We don't want our serious business applications confused with games."

Microsoft did not comment on the discussions, but confirmed that it is talking with Xbox Tech's attorneys. The company says that while there are several U.S. companies operating under the name Xbox, Van Leeuwen's firm is the only one that has approached it. No legal action has been filed on either side.

But ''the mere fact that one company was out there first doesn't preempt the second company's use of the name," says Claude Stern, a partner with the law firm Fenwick and West in Palo Alto, Calif. ''There are a lot of companies out there with the names Acme and AAAA."

Xbox Tech might have a strong case if it can prove that consumers are likely to be confused by the duplicate name. It must also show that the two products would be sold in similar distribution channels, and that ''Xbox" is not just a descriptive term. Descriptive terms--which explain what the company or product does and are viewed as more generic--are harder to protect than fanciful names. So far, there's no dispute over the companies' domain names; Microsoft has xbox.com and Xbox Tech. has xboxtechnologies.com.

Legal merits aside, Microsoft will probably pay to make this problem disappear. The last thing it needs right now is a protracted legal dispute over the game machine's name.

It could release Xbox and deal with a lawsuit later, but then it could open itself up for bigger expenses. In a landmark case in 1977, Big O Tires was awarded \$19.6 million from Goodyear over Goodyear's use of the name ''bigfoot" tires. The amount equaled 25% of Goodyear's advertising budget in the states where Big O operated. The amount was cut on appeal and later settled.

The ''bigfoot" case has helped small companies with their trademark claims. Microsoft paid a search company an estimated \$5 million to use the name ''Explorer" prior to the launch of its Internet Explorer browser. And in November 1999, Amazon.com paid a Minnesota bookstore an unknown sum for the rights to the name Amazon.

''Everything has monetary value," says Van Leeuwen.

Microsoft has been humbled by its effort to enter the \$7 billion videogame business. Resolving a squabble over the product's name should be the easy part.

## TDK And DreamWorks Announce Shrek Xbox

### Green Ogre Gets Green Light

TDK Mediactive Inc. Tuesday announced the company's first game for the Xbox video game console from Microsoft will be based on DreamWorks Pictures computer animated comedy, Shrek, which opens nationwide on May 18.

The game is one of the official first-wave Xbox titles scheduled for a fall 2001 launch. TDK Mediactive recently announced a worldwide, five-year licensing agreement with DreamWorks to develop Shrek titles for video game platforms.

"TDK Mediactive is excited to be part of the first wave of the Xbox experience, especially with such a high-profile license. Shrek is a great video game character," remarked Vincent Bitetti, chief executive officer of TDK Mediactive.

"This is our first future-generation console title announcement and we couldn't be more pleased with the support we have received from DreamWorks and Microsoft in this endeavor."

Once upon a time, in a far away swamp, there lived an ornery ogre named Shrek, whose precious solitude is suddenly shattered by an invasion of annoying fairy tale creatures. There are blind mice in his food; a big, bad wolf in his bed; three little homeless pigs and more, all banished from their kingdom by the evil Lord Farquaad.

Determined to save their home -- not to mention his own -- Shrek cuts a deal with Farquaad and sets out to rescue the beautiful Princess Fiona to be Farquaad's bride. Accompanying him on his mission is a wisecracking Donkey, who will do anything for Shrek ... except shut up.

Rescuing the Princess from a fire-breathing dragon may prove the least of their problems when the deep, dark secret she has been keeping is revealed. "Shrek" is based on a children's book by William Steig.

TDK Mediactive will work with DreamWorks to create new storylines and characters to appear in the Xbox title. Character and world-object models from the film will be available in standard 3D-modeling format for expression onto Xbox, which uses higher-resolution models and textures than any other gaming console available.

This symbiotic expression should provide a seamless transition from the movie experience into the video game experience.

"DreamWorks is pleased to be part of this landmark product launch," commented Brad Globe, Head of DreamWorks Consumer Products. "TDK has demonstrated a tremendous creative vision for Shrek and we are excited to work with them."

TDK Mediactive has engaged Canadian developer Sandbox Studios as its development partner for Shrek Xbox. Sandbox has developed games for Mattel, Konami, Sierra, Ubi Soft, Vatical and other game publishers and has robust proprietary technology, which is being enhanced for the TDK Shrek Xbox title.

Sandbox is working closely with TDK Mediactive game producer Ken Fox to

maximize the gaming experience and oversee coordination between TDK, DreamWorks, Microsoft and Sandbox.

## NHL FaceOff 2001 for the PlayStation2 Computer Entertainment System Skates Into Stores

### Popular Hockey Franchise Makes its Debut for Revolutionary PlayStation 2

Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. announced that the newest member of its highly-touted hockey videogame series, NHL FaceOff 2001, is now available for the PlayStation2 computer entertainment system. Modeled after true-to-life hockey physics, NHL FaceOff 2001 utilizes the power of the PlayStation 2 to provide consumers with blazing gameplay and responsive player controls. Gamers can also play as or against a team of hockey legends comprised of 13 NHL greats including "Mr. Hockey" Gordie Howe, Bobby Hull, Phil Esposito and Marcel Dionne, a feature exclusive to NHL FaceOff 2001 for PlayStation 2.

"We are thrilled to bring the fastest and most responsive NHL hockey action to the PlayStation 2 sports enthusiast," said Ami Blaire, director, product marketing, Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. "Incorporating the finest elements of the FaceOff franchise, NHL FaceOff 2001 for the PlayStation 2 will please fans of the series and new gamers alike with exclusive features such as the 989 Sports NHL Legends team."

With more than 1,000 intricately-detailed animations, NHL FaceOff 2001 boasts five times the animations as its counterpart for the PlayStationfi game console, offering more than 500 skater and 180 goalie animations that offer gamers a true sense of what it is like to skate with the best. NHL FaceOff 2001 includes the most updated rosters of all 30 NHL teams, including the expansion Minnesota Wild and Columbus Blue Jackets. Gamers can also track individual and team stats and compete for any of 15 NHL awards, including the Hart Memorial, Art Ross, Vezina, Conn Smythe, Presidents and the highly-coveted Stanley Cup.

In addition, a series of new features affords gamers the opportunity to build and manage their team before the puck is even dropped. The FaceOff 2001 Draft Mode lets gamers build their own teams from scratch and battle for the Stanley Cup. Players can utilize the line manager to organize their teams into four forward lines, three defensive pairs, two five-man power play lines, two four-man power play lines, two four-man penalty killing units, a shootout lineup and two extra attackers. Finally, a new Practice Mode allows players to sharpen their skating, passing, checking and scoring skills before taking to the ice against an official opponent.

When ready, gamers can choose from several additional play modes including Exhibition, Season, Tournament and Shootout. NHL FaceOff 2001 is built for one or two players and can accommodate up to eight players with the aid of the multitap(for PlayStation 2).

New Jersey Devils play-by-play announcer Mike Emrick and hockey analyst Darren Pang return to call the exciting game action. Combined with an astonishingly lifelike game environment complete with crowd chants and hit songs from real-life artists, NHL FaceOff 2001 gives gamers a front-row seat to the best hockey action available for PlayStation 2.

NHL FaceOff 2001 features Toronto Maple Leafs goaltender Curtis Joseph on the package.

NHL FaceOff 2001 for the PlayStation 2 Computer Entertainment System Key Features:

- Every player and team for the 2000-2001 season is included -- even the Columbus Blue Jackets and Minnesota Wild, plus eight international teams
- Play as or against thirteen NHL legends including Gordie Howe, Bobby Hull, Phil Esposito, Marcel Dionne, Dennis Potvin, Guy LeFleur, Stan Makita, Doug Harvey, Mike Bossy, Red Kelly, Jacques Plante, Pierre Pilote and Bryan Trottier
- Four all-new play modes:
  - Tournament Mode -- a competition pitting the world's best international teams
  - Shootout Mode -- puts gamers in a one-on-one battle versus a goalie who is determined to stop your best shot
  - Practice Mode -- lets gamers perfect passing, shooting, skating and checking skills
  - Draft Mode -- assume the responsibilities of a general manager by drafting and trading players to build a championship-caliber team
- Player models running at 2,500 polygons, close to ten times as many as the PlayStation version, are based on actual player size, weight and facial appearance
- More than 1,000 motion captured animations including 500 plus skater and more than 180 goalie animations providing the most realistic hockey action available. Motion-captured players include Chicago Blackhawks winger Tony Amonte and St. Louis Blues winger Scott Young
- New Line Manager Feature allows players to choose from more than 12 different offensive and defensive strategies while utilizing the roster to create strategic lines
- New Shot Aim Option allows you to control the direction of your shot during your back swing as you prepare to launch a rocket past the goalie
- TV-style presentation features two-man commentary, including New Jersey Devils' acclaimed announcer Mike Emrick and analyst Darren Pang
- Seven different gameplay camera angle options and countless cut-aways, zoom-ins, pop-up stats and in-game panels provide impressive TV-style telecast
- Realistic skating physics lets players and the puck glide naturally across the ice. Players utilize cross-over steps when turning and skating backwards -- just as in the NHL
- Gamers can track more than 30 individual and team statistics and compete for any of 15 NHL awards, including the Hart Memorial, Art Ross, Vezina, Conn Smythe, Presidents' trophies and the highly coveted Stanley Cup
- "Puck Halo" makes the puck easier to see and play when in the corners and in front of the net
- NHL arenas are presented in lifelike detail -- each arena's characteristics are included, even the championship banners
- Refined Icon Switching on defense and Icon Passing on offense translate into the most realistic hockey control available
- On-the-fly strategy control allows the gamer change his attack with the touch of a button
- Full season and game statistics are available in every offensive and defensive category
- Create and manage teams with complete rosters -- draft, trade, release

- and sign free agents
- Supports the DUALSHOCK 2 analog controller for ultra-realistic experience
- Up to eight players can hit the ice with the multitap (for PlayStation2)

The independent Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) rates NHL FaceOff 2001 ``E" for ``Everyone."

## ATV Offroad Fury Steers the Thrill and Excitement of ATV Racing Onto Playstation2

Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. announced the nationwide release of ATV Offroad Fury, an exhilarating and action-packed ATV (All-Terrain Vehicle) racing game that showcases the stunning graphic capabilities of the PlayStation2 computer entertainment system. Featuring white-knuckle action and speed, huge free-roaming and competitive racing environments, more than 20 different offroad racing tracks and a hard rock soundtrack, ATV Offroad Fury harnesses the power of PlayStation 2, bringing the true spirit of ATV racing to life in the most realistic ATV simulation yet.

ATV Offroad Fury provides gamers with a multitude of options to enhance their ATV racing experience, with 11 authentic ATV models, six different event types and three styles of bikes to choose from. Players can select their ATV from high-profile manufacturers such as Honda, Yamaha and Kawasaki. A Garage feature allows players to further customize their driving experience by tweaking options such as tire friction, shock reaction, steering and braking.

ATV Offroad Fury also includes a stellar lineup of music from a variety of top hard rock artists, including Anthrax, Primus, Sevendust and UltraSpank, providing players with an emotionally-charged racing environment.

``ATV Offroad Fury immerses gamers in a realistic and fast-paced racing world complete with stunts, enormous environments and adrenaline-pumping action," said Ami Blaire, director, product marketing, Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. ``Gamers and racing enthusiasts alike will be completely absorbed by the authentic feel and the challenging competitive action of this exciting new racing game for the PlayStation 2 computer entertainment system."

With the Multitap (for PlayStation 2) ATV Offroad Fury allows up to four players to compete against one another in a race experience like no other. Huge, free-roaming environments of up to two square miles in area encourage players to experience true offroad racing, navigating their way to the finish line over sandy deserts, rocky hillsides and deeply forested mountain trails. Players can choose from 11 different ATV models, taking into consideration factors such as traction, acceleration, top speed and stability, depending upon the landscape. Realistic physics force gamers to feel every bump, turn and crash in the terrain, and a track editor allows players to diversify the competition by creating their own unique racetrack within the existing environments.

Key features in ATV Offroad Fury include:

- Highly competitive racing including authentic stunts, realistic crashes and challenging opponent ATV riders



- Huge, free-roaming environments providing gamers the opportunity to truly race offroad with courses as large as 2 square miles in area
- A choice of 11 ATV models featuring high-profile manufacturers such as Honda, Kawasaki and Yamaha. Each bike offers performance ratings for Traction, Acceleration, Top Speed and Stability
- More than 20 offroad racing tracks, featuring an abundance of diverse terrain environments
- A Garage feature that allows you to tweak your ATV to determine each bike's driving capabilities by changing options such as tire friction, shock reaction, steering and braking
- Stunning graphics with extremely detailed landscapes that feature mountains, surface plants, foliage and AI riders
- Edgy, hard rock soundtrack featuring Anthrax, Primus, Sevendust and UltraSpank amongst others
- Three different styles of bikes to choose from -- two-stroke, four-stroke and 650 bikes
- Realistic physics engine, forcing gamers to feel every bump, turn and crash in the road
- Three different race modes to choose from including Practice, Single Race and Lap Attack
- Waypoint Editor allows players to create their own races within a given environment
- Six different event types including:
  - Training Mode -- This option allows players to practice their stunts, turns and braking abilities. Straightaways, hard turns and tons of jumps challenge the rider to learn the basics
  - Cross-Country Enduro Series -- Players can make their own way to the finish line by racing on-track or off-track in races that range from two to ten laps, depending on user preference
  - Freestyle Stunt Competitions -- Players must complete stunts within a given timeframe to achieve the highest score. Environments are filled with hundreds of natural jumps, including small hills and mountains
  - Stadium Supercross -- This event features seven indoor stadium tracks, which include 180-degree hairpin turns, outward banking-turn slopes and jumps. Races range from two to ten laps and are on-track racing only
  - MAXXIS Nationals -- Real-life race courses that require players to complete laps rather than go through checkpoints. This event features 11 courses with on-track and off-track racing
  - Pro Career -- This challenging, long-term, single-player mode runs on the tracks that make up the MAXXIS Nationals and Stadium Supercross.

The independent Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) rates ATV Offroad Fury 'E' for 'Everyone.'

## EA SPORTS Ships Knockout Kings 2001 for the Playstation 2

Get into the ring and lace up the gloves with the best selling boxing franchise of all time. Electronic Arts announced the release Knockout Kings 2001, for the PlayStation 2 computer entertainment system. With its unparalleled line-up of boxers, this EA SPORTS game further distinguishes itself from the competition by capturing this elite cast of boxing stars and legends in the most realistic boxing game to date.

The Knockout Kings franchise features 40 of today's top boxers and boxing legends and is known for featuring the most extensive line-up of boxing talent in the genre. Knockout Kings 2001 also has a distinguished list of exclusive boxers like Muhammad Ali, Joe Frazier, Sugar Ray Leonard, Oscar De La Hoya, Lennox Lewis and Shane Mosley. Plus, this year in Knockout Kings 2001 the women move in and take center stage. Mia St. John, Christy Martin, Lucia Rijker and Regina Halmich will all be in Knockout Kings 2001 and bring a fresh new look to the game.

Each fighter comes with his or her own personal biography detailing their career and their approach to the "sweet science" of boxing. And, as always, EA SPORTS delivers the sport's realism. Each fighter's strength, weight, height, speed, reach, and stamina are factored into the artificial intelligence (AI) to ensure a realistic boxing experience. EA SPORTS has also incorporated individual fighting styles and signature moves, which were provided by many of the boxers for the game. Utilizing motion-capture technology, a process where boxers wear a computerized suit that measures body movements, the production team captured all their moves and re-created them in the game.

In addition, to truly capture the look of the boxers in Knockout Kings 2001, the production team used a precision set of 3D cameras to scan the fighters' faces and bodies and record their images for the game. The cameras captured a detailed 3D likeness of the boxers, not missing the smallest detail of today's hottest boxers.

An enhanced career mode allows gamers to create and train a boxer in their image, manage their career and ultimately get a shot at the title. After creating your boxer, selecting skin color, facial hair, trunks, weight class, fighting style, and more, you must work your way up from small club fights to the larger venues and eventually the hallowed grounds of Madison Square Garden. The training segment of the career mode will help hone fighting skills as gamers learn to counter-punch, block and throw combinations.

New to Knockout Kings 2001 is Dynamic Punch Control, a feature that allows a player to control every punch in a combination, carefully blending the different punches without losing speed or timing. This level of control, in addition to the breathtaking graphics, gives the game a new level of realism and depth. "Signature moves" give individual boxers' their own knockout punch or defensive move that leaves the opponent swinging at air. Better footwork, faster button-response and quicker punch and blocking moves make the user feel he truly is controlling everything the boxer is doing in the ring.

10 different hip-hop artists contributed original tracks from their latest records to the incredible Knockout Kings 2001 soundtrack. Some of the top artists and songs include, Tony Touch, "Super Heavyweight," Dilated Peoples, "The Main Event," Tash, "Destruction" and the Black Eyed Peas with the original title, "It's On." These songs come on randomly throughout gameplay, but they also can be selected in the "Slugfest" mode if a gamer likes a particular song and wants to have it on when they fight.

In addition to the music soundtrack, the production team brought other audio elements to new heights in order to bring a feeling of realism to the game. Exciting commentary and analysis from Al Bernstein, Max Kellerman and Teddy Atlas keep the gamer informed on what is happening from a strategic standpoint. Referees in the game include Mills Lane and Richard Steel, and they help keep things fair by calling out low blows, rabbit punches, and

other illegal moves that can lose a fighter points from a judges card. Jimmy Lennon Jr. makes ring announcements to give the fight a big time feel.

Knockout Kings 2001 for the PlayStation 2 is rated ``T" (Teen) by the ESRB. The game has a suggested retail price of \$49.95.

Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. Brings  
the PlayStation2 Computer Entertainment System  
and NBA ShootOut 2001 to NBA All-Star Weekend

In an effort to provide thousands of basketball fans and NBA players at the NBA All-Star Weekend the chance to experience the PlayStation2 computer entertainment system and the 989 Sports' development team's latest installation of the popular NBA ShootOut basketball franchise, Sony Computer Entertainment America (SCEA) Inc. announced participation at festivities in conjunction with the NBA All-Star Weekend. During the All-Star Weekend, February 9 through 11 in Washington, D.C., fans can play NBA ShootOut 2001 at the NBA Jam Session, as well as at the All-Star Comedy Celebration and Block Party at Planet Hollywood. In addition, as many NBA players are traditionally enthusiastic fans of the NBA ShootOut series, PlayStation 2 kiosks will be located in the player hospitality suite at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Washington, D.C. NBA ShootOut 2001 captures the true feel of NBA basketball with amazingly realistic stadium and player models, strategic input from NBA players including Chris Webber as well as a TV-style presentation featuring multiple camera angles and commentary by New Jersey Nets broadcaster Ian Eagle.

Throughout the NBA All-Star Weekend, from February 9 through 11, Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. will participate in the NBA Jam Session, a fan festival featuring full range of interactive activities, exhibitions and educational seminars designed for basketball fans of all ages located at the Washington Convention Center. When visiting the NBA Arcade at the Jam Session, fans will have the chance to play NBA ShootOut 2001 for the PlayStation 2 computer entertainment system at one of ten PlayStation 2 kiosks set up in the arcade.

Fans purchasing tickets to the All-Star Comedy Celebration and Block Party charity event at Planet Hollywood on Saturday, February 10 will be able to mingle with celebrities and dozens of current and past NBA players as well as challenge their friends to a game of NBA ShootOut 2001 for PlayStation 2. The evening will include live performances by Dr. Dre and Mary J. Blige, and expected attendees include Magic Johnson, Omar Epps, Jay-Z, Jamie Foxx and other celebrities. While general admission tickets are available for \$25 and up, VIP tickets can also be purchased for \$125. Proceeds will benefit The National Kidney Foundation of the National Capital Area.

``Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. is excited to add to the festivities surrounding this year's NBA All-Star Game with NBA ShootOut 2001 for the PlayStation 2," said Sharon Shapiro, director, promotions, Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. ``Fans and players at this year's NBA All-Star Game will be able to enjoy for the first time the NBA experience that only the 989 Sports development team and the PlayStation 2 can deliver."

=~==~==

A-ONE's Headline News  
The Latest in Computer Technology News  
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

Juno Announces Web Service Plan

Juno Online Services Inc. may require subscribers of its free Internet service to give up additional control of their computers, prompting complaints about privacy and security risks.

Juno, which now compels those users to view ads and share marketing data, wants to raise additional revenues by selling unused processing power from subscribers' computers to research institutions and corporations.

In such a scenario, Juno software would run whenever subscribers leave their computers idle for a given period of time. The software would operate much like a screen saver and halt when the subscriber resumes computer use.

New terms posted on Juno's Web site in recent weeks and publicized by the company on Thursday give Juno the right to require new and existing free Internet subscribers to leave computers on around the clock.

A user's computer could even be programmed by Juno's software to automatically call Juno's systems with computational results if the user does not access the service frequently enough.

Users would have to pay for electricity, computer maintenance and in some cases long-distance telephone charges. Juno and its partners would keep any profits if the computations generate anything of commercial value.

Richard Smith, chief technology officer for the Privacy Foundation, has qualms about opening up computers this way: "How do I know somebody isn't messing with my data?"

"I have concerns about how well their customers will be aware of what's going on," he added.

In announcing the Juno Virtual Supercomputer Network initiative Thursday, chief executive Charles E. Ardai called it "a way to derive new forms of revenue from assets we already have."

Purveyors of free Internet access have struggled as revenues from online ads dwindle.

In December, online search portal AltaVista cut off some 3 million users from its free service. NetZero, Juno and BlueLight.com are the only major free services remaining, and Juno hopes to remain so. But the company has yet to show a profit.

Juno claims more than 14 million registered users, 4 million of which it says log on at least once a month. They include the free users and those who pay for premium services.

The Juno initiative is a form of "distributed computing," a way of breaking complex tasks into smaller pieces that individual computers can work on. It is already done on a volunteer basis by astronomy buffs probing for extraterrestrial life.

Ardai said the company has not secured any deals yet to sell its supercomputing services, but he envisions signing up biotechnology companies as customers.

Demand for such computational power is expected to grow rapidly as the budding field of bioinformatics takes off. Bioinformatics, which requires massive number crunching, is the use of computerized databases to help scientists decipher genetic information needed to combat disease and prolong life.

At first, Juno's supercomputer network will be tested using volunteers. But if Juno needs more computing power, said spokesman Gary Baker, the company may require it of the heaviest users or of all users of the free service.

Subscribers would have the option to upgrade to a paid service to avoid the requirement.

George Kurtz, chief executive with security company Foundstone Inc., said that while Juno's service appears free, "you're paying for the service with privacy."

Kurtz is concerned about what might be monitored on a subscriber's computer, how that information might be used and, from a security perspective, what kind of code would be run.

Bruce Murphy, chief executive of another security firm, Vigilinx, warned of "electronic Armageddon" if malicious software is distributed despite Juno's best intentions.

Baker said Juno would institute unspecified safeguards to prevent its partners from commanding computers inappropriately. He also said Juno had no interest in snooping.

"This system is designed to use the processing powers of these computers, and not to look at hard drives, read cookies or do anything of malicious fashion," Baker said. "These things are not required to do what we need to do."

#### Juno's Money-making Scheme Has Watchdogs All Shook Up

The supercomputer project has both consumer advocates worried that subscribers' computers will be vulnerable to all kinds of mischief -- including snooping by third parties.

Juno Online Service's jump into the supercomputing business has alarmed consumer and privacy advocates, who fear the move could open subscribers' computers to vulnerabilities--including snooping by third parties such as the government.

Juno quietly posted a new agreement for subscribers of its free Internet service. Those customers must allow the downloading of software that would perform computational tasks unrelated to Internet connection. They must

also agree to leave their computers on all the time if asked. The software would replace the screensaver, and people would not be able to uninstall or tamper with it. Furthermore, under the terms of the agreement, Juno would have the right to "initiate a telephone connection from your computer to Juno's central computers."

The market for free Internet service providers has been hit particularly hard during the dot-com downturn, mainly because it relies heavily on advertising dollars. To make more money, Juno, which gets about one-third of its revenue from advertising, is hoping to sell unused processing power on member computers to third parties, who can string them together in a virtual daisy chain to form a supercomputer.

However, defenders of privacy and consumer rights worry the new requirements amount to an unprecedented exchange of personal property and data to get something for free. Worse, they say, Juno customers might not understand what kind of relationship they're getting themselves into when they click on the agreement. They're also criticizing the company for slipping the wording into the agreement Jan. 18 and then not going public with the plan until Feb. 1.

Ari Schwartz, a policy analyst with the Center for Democracy and Technology, worries the new rules will make it easier for government investigators to violate constitutional provisions against unreasonable search and seizure. For example, he said, weak wiretapping laws could allow federal investigators to go through Juno to gain access to customers' computers without their knowledge via the software that's installed on their machines.

"Individuals are in some ways signing over their Fourth Amendment rights by opening up their computers," Schwartz said. "It's too bad that to protect people's privacy, they have to pay extra."

Juno spokesman Gary Baker downplayed such concerns and said the new pact wouldn't actually require subscribers to keep their computers on all the time--only for a few prescribed hours. He also said paid subscribers, which make up about 20 percent of Juno's 4 million customers, would be exempt from the rules. In addition, he said the computers wouldn't be connected to the Internet constantly because most of the computations would take place offline, synching up to the system only when a customer connects to the Internet.

However, people who sign onto the service must agree to a policy that "may require you to leave your computer turned on at all times."

Baker said he's confident that most of the company's existing subscribers will agree to the terms. After all, he said, Juno already requires members to agree to, among other things, a permanent display screen that shows ads.

"They're already making some sacrifices in exchange for some free Internet access," Baker said.

The company plans to announce more details of the plan, and who qualifies, in the coming months.

"This is a tremendous resource that is being wasted by people when they leave their computers off," he said.

The idea of accessing consumer machines for distributed computing projects

isn't new. For example, 18 million people have donated their dormant computing power to the SETI Institute, the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence. Other community-based programs have let people give unused computer time to scientists researching diseases such as AIDS. And United Devices lets people give their processing power to commercial projects and causes such as cancer research in exchange for cash and prizes.

Still, Richard Smith, chief technology officer of the Privacy Foundation, is concerned that the software Juno installs on customers' computers might make their machines less reliable, causing them to slow or crash. Juno said it is designing the software so that it doesn't interfere with home machines.

What's more, Smith said, companies who potentially could sign up for the extra processing power might not want their intellectual property floating freely on random customers' computers. Juno said it was still researching security issues. Whatever the case, Juno's plan is sure to be a test of how much consumers are willing to give up in exchange for free service.

Smith said that when he first came across the agreement it was troublesome. "I just read it over and said, 'Oh my God. Who would agree to this?'"

Some people took to the message boards to dissect the new policy. One person on DejaNews said: "It smacks of George Orwell's 1984. I'll give up my Internet before I accept this sort of invasive intrusion into my privacy."

Others wondered whether it was hoax or asked if someone could explain what the terms were really saying. And still others took Juno's side, pointing out that people shouldn't expect something for nothing. "There's no such thing as a free lunch," wrote one.

#### Appeals Court To Rule on Napster

The federal appeals panel considering Napster Inc.'s immediate fate will issue its ruling Monday in the high profile music-sharing lawsuit, the court announced Friday.

The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said a decision by the three-judge panel will be released by 11 a.m. The decision will be posted at the court's Internet site.

The court, which in the past year has issued rulings in favor of technology despite concerns of copyright infringement, national security and Internet monopolies, heard the recording industry's case in October against Napster, whose site acts as a gateway for millions of online surfers to exchange and record copyrighted music.

The recording industry wants Napster shut down, alleging it is contributing to widespread copyright infringement, and is pursuing legal action against the company in federal court in San Francisco.

The question before the appeals court is whether to remove Napster from the Internet or allow it to keep operating while that case continues. The 9th Circuit temporarily halted a federal judge's July order shutting down Napster so it could decide Napster's short-term status for itself.

Napster maintains it is just providing a service for users to share music and not all of the music is copyright protected.

## New Battle Strategies Heat Up War On Spam

Cheaper than a phone call, more reliable than bulk mail, the phenomenon of unsolicited commercial e-mail (UCE) -- widely known as spam -- has persuaded many marketers that electronic junk mail is the Holy Grail of mass marketing.

But before companies make the decision to join the parade of mass e-mailers, they should be aware that there is growing antipathy among Internet businesses, privacy advocates and U.S. legislators, all of whom are gearing up to fight the spam phenomenon.

Moreover, although most forms of spam are still legal, companies that adopt spam marketing campaigns may be sending the wrong message to the very potential clients they are attempting to win over.

One of the strongest anti-spam organizations in cyberspace is the Coalition Against Unsolicited Commercial E-Mail (CAUCE), a volunteer lobbying group that works to rid inboxes of unsolicited e-mail. CAUCE is interested not only in sparing consumers the headaches of dealing with spam, but also in protecting Net users from what has become an increasingly easy avenue for fraud.

CAUCE points out that very few reputable companies use UCEs for marketing legitimate products. More often, spam e-mail advertises chain letters, pyramid schemes and pornographic Web sites, as well as "get rich quick" schemes, shady stock information, phony medical products and pirated software.

Spam e-mail advertisements also offer software and e-mailing services that propel the unsolicited e-mail industry forward by gathering personal information to load into databases for sale to the next spammer.

While companies loathe spending valuable time and server space dealing with spam coming into their systems, it has proven extremely difficult to establish a legal standard for distinguishing unsolicited junk mail from legitimate marketing messages that people would welcome. The tricky issue has given lawmakers nothing but headaches.

"Unlike viruses, where there is a consensus about what they are and how harmful they can be, spam is more challenging," Mark Levitt, IDC research director told NewsFactor Network. "Two different recipients of an unsolicited bulk email (UBE) can legitimately differ on whether it is unwanted."

Added Levitt, "Whether a legitimate offer of products and services in an e-mail is spam depends on the level of interest of the recipient in hearing about it."

Whenever spam clearly crosses the line from mere annoyance into illegality, however, law enforcement officials have no qualms about stepping in. Last month, the U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC) reported that together with its law enforcement partners, it had taken legal action against hundreds of scam artists who used e-mail, direct mail and faxes to



defraud consumers during the past year.

The coalition of government and private sector organizations, known as "Project Mailbox," has brought charges against over 100 potentially fraudulent, unsolicited "spam" e-mail sent by Net-related companies.

What can companies and individuals do to stem the tide of unsolicited junk e-mail? IDC's Levitt told NewsFactor that many businesses install filters on their e-mail servers to block e-mail that might contain non-business language, or come from a source known to have send unsolicited e-mail in the past.

Nonetheless, the spam keeps on rolling in.

And as the problem grows, the proposed solutions are becoming more drastic. In some Internet circles, talk has arisen of making spammers pay to access the very medium that makes spam so seductive: free e-mail.

But if spammers have to pay for e-mail, what about the rest of the e-mailing public? Unthinkable? Think again.

According to a recent report from Jupiter, portals and Internet service providers (ISPs) intend to begin charging online marketers for the massive volume of e-mail they send across the Web.

While the idea will be incredibly unpopular with individual e-mail users, the silver lining may be that e-mail fees will discourage spammers from flooding the bandwidth.

Jupiter predicts that by 2005, advertisers are expected to send some 268 billion e-mail messages -- 22 times the amount of e-mail sent last year.

"Internet e-mail service providers control a crucial chokepoint between marketers and the millions of consumers they want to reach," said Jupiter analyst Christopher Todd. "As they restrict access to a user's primary inbox and monetize the delivery of promotional e-mail, advertisers looking to reach consumers online must prepare to pay a premium."

Perhaps legislation that cracks down on spam will prevent the need for ISPs to charge for e-mail delivery. And because of the frustration that many e-mail recipients at work and at home feel as a result of spam, demand for new e-mail filtering software will continue to increase.

But one thing is for sure. Spam is no longer just a part of doing business on the Web, and forces are in motion to rid inboxes everywhere of unwanted junk e-mail.

#### Microsoft Dropping \$400 MSN Rebate

Microsoft announced Friday that it will discontinue its \$400 rebate to new subscribers of MSN Internet service, a deal that drove PC buying but also created a financial crimp for the company.

The Redmond, Wash.-based software giant, which is battling America Online for subscribers, will instead offer one free year of MSN to buyers of new personal computers.

Microsoft is not specifying which new computers will come with the one-year free service. Instead, the company is letting retailers pick which computers it will attach to the offer. One retailer may include the offer with all PCs in the store, while another may only include PCs from Compaq Computer or IBM.

So far, only RadioShack and Best Buy have agreed to participate in the program, but Microsoft representatives said other outlets are likely to sign on soon.

The \$400 rebate deal began in November 1999. With some exceptions, it applied to people who purchased PCs and committed to three years of MSN service. The deal will end in the first week of March. The one-year free service will begin in the spring, possibly as soon as the current offer expires.

The idea for one year of free service is not entirely new. In November, Microsoft and Dell Computer said they would offer buyers of Dell consumer PCs one free year of Internet access through MSN.

MSN, which has more than 4 million subscribers in all, added 500,000 in the fourth quarter of 2000. By comparison, AOL has nearly 27 million subscribers.

Despite a massive slowdown in PC sales, Microsoft expects the new offer to attract at least 500,000 new subscribers in each of the next several quarters, said Bob Visse, lead product manager for MSN marketing.

"I don't see any end to it, and I think we'll actually be able to accelerate it," Visse said of the goal. "The service and the products are being so well received that we think we can continue growing the business based on those things."

Analysts had been anticipating some change in the rebate structure for MSN because Microsoft executives complained in a Jan. 18 earnings conference call that the \$400 offer was eating into the company's bottom line.

MSN service costs \$21.95 per month, so the one year of free service is worth \$263.40 to subscribers. Visse would not say whether the new offer and its associated ad and marketing campaign will cost the company more or less than the \$400 rebates, but he said the company's guidance for earnings and revenue won't change because of the new promotion.

"As far as the bottom line for Microsoft, this will not have any change to the guidance announced in the Jan. 18 earnings call...There was already an adjustment made at that time," Visse said. "Overall, I can't give you real clarity as to 'Will this cost less or more to the business?' in that it's not an apples-to-apples comparison."

Although Microsoft doesn't want to compare the two promotions, analysts are eager to do just that. IDC analyst Roger Kay speculated that the new program will be more economical for Microsoft, but he wondered whether the company was shifting programs exclusively to cut costs.

"Does that mean they have enough (subscribers) or does it mean they can't afford it?" Kay said. "I've got to believe it's more the latter than the former. You can't give away the store forever."

The advent of the \$400 rebates in late 1999 led to a boom in midyear PC sales in 2000. However, Kay said, the rebates have probably run their

course as far as convincing people who don't own a PC to buy one.

"I would say the (PC industry) has ridden it about as far as they can," Kay said.

The new promotion is likely to elicit grumbles from retailers, who relied heavily on \$400 MSN rebates to sell PCs during the first part of 2000. Microsoft also extended the rebate to other non-PC products. Retailing giant Best Buy, for example, sold 200,000 MSN subscriptions and gave \$400 instant rebates on anything in the store.

Compared with a \$400 discount, consumers may have a more difficult time determining the value of the new program or may not consider it at all when trying to decide whether to buy a computer, said Matt Sargent, industry analyst for ARS.

"To be honest, customers don't put a whole lot of value in it. They just see it as a free trial," Sargent said. "It's a smart move for Microsoft, but I don't think it's going to help retailers at all. If it's just a free year of service, where's the carrot here?"

Microsoft would not say whether it was giving a cut to participating retailers or divulge any information about how the new promotion will affect retailers.

The company also announced Friday that it will kick off other promotions in the spring. The company will offer a \$200 rebate for two years of MSN Internet access, as well as a \$75 rebate on a nine-month subscription.

Both of those promotions are independent of the new one-year offer, and Microsoft will not require customers who want to sign up for the two-year or nine-month subscriptions to purchase a new PC.

#### Netscape Browser Ratchets Up To Version 6.01

AOL Time Warner on Wednesday quietly released a minor upgrade to its Netscape 6.0 browser.

Version 6.01 is available from the Netscape FTP server, but AOL Time Warner had not, as of early Thursday morning, posted the update to the Web. The new browser also could not be accessed through the Netscape 6 SmartUpdate feature.

America Online in November released Netscape 6 after more than 32 months of development. But the browser received sharp criticism for being too buggy and performing more like beta software than a finished release. The update is supposed to address those issues.

While the company has touted the long-anticipated and much-delayed browser, Netscape 6 faces an uphill battle against Microsoft's Internet Explorer browser. Internet Explorer has about 91 percent of the browser market, according to market researcher PC Data.

In a strange twist, AOL Time Warner faces potential competition from Netscape's open-source browser project--that is, if the operation can ever get a browser out the door. Mozilla.org has labored for about three years to deliver a next-generation browser, in an effort to demonstrate that

open-source programmers from different companies can collaborate to deliver a viable commercial product.

For now, Internet Explorer remains Netscape's biggest challenge. With the release of version 6, America Online tied more content to the browser than ever before, some of which is available from the Netscape Web site exclusively through AOL's browser.

With a beta release of Internet Explorer 6.0 leaked to the Web last week, Microsoft has taken a similar content-tying approach. A newer test version of the browser is expected to appear next week in the second beta of Windows XP, Microsoft's successor to Windows Me and 2000.

#### Microsoft Rebrands Products with 'Experience' Theme

Microsoft on Monday said it is renaming upcoming versions of its Windows operating system and Office business software in a move that emphasizes the software giant's push toward Internet-based computing.

Microsoft will dub its two flagship products Windows XP and Office XP, with the XP standing for "experience," the Redmond, Wash.-based company said.

The move is also Microsoft's biggest rebranding effort since the arrival of Windows 95 five years ago started its custom of naming products after the year of their launch.

"One of the primary reasons we picked the name is because in the longer term we are going to be building a richer and richer experience for people, and these are the first set of products that will be delivering that richness," Tom Bailey, lead product manager for Office, said in an interview.

Windows XP, previously code-named "Whistler," will be launched in the second half of 2001, as announced earlier, Microsoft said.

Microsoft also confirmed that Office XP, which had been called "Office 10," is to come out by the end of the first half of 2001.

Microsoft's stock rose \$1-1/8, or 1.9 percent, to \$61-15/16 in Nasdaq trading. The stock has tumbled from a year high of \$115 amid sluggish computer sales and corporate technology spending.

Windows XP is a long-awaited update to the company's personal computer operating system that will finally scrap the outdated DOS programming technology that consumer versions have so far been based on.

The new software will feature the technology at the heart of Windows 2000, Microsoft's operating system for business and corporate customers that is more powerful, reliable and secure than the consumer product.

XP signals another step by Microsoft to try to woo customers to its .NET vision that aims to deliver software as Web-based services that will enable users to easily swap data between different devices.

"The coming generation of Windows XP and Office XP will enable customers to communicate and collaborate more effectively, be more creative and productive, and have more fun with technology," company founder and

Chairman Bill Gates said in a statement.

Gates is scheduled to reveal more details about Windows XP next week at a bash at Seattle's Experience Music Project, a high-tech shrine to rock music built by Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen.

The "experience" theme has also fueled speculation that Microsoft will scrap its current Windows theme song -- "Start Me Up" by the Rolling Stones -- in favor of Jimi Hendrix's "Are You Experienced?"

The last major branding shift for Microsoft's products came with the release of Windows 95, which replaced Windows 3.1. That product followed the common software industry practice of tacking version numbers after the product title.

### Microsoft Chooses New Product Names

The next versions of Microsoft's most popular products will be called Windows XP and Office XP - with the "XP" standing for "experience" - the software giant said Monday.

Until now, the new desktop operating system had been code-named Whistler and the new version of the business software was called Office 10.

By using letters instead of the old naming convention of the approximate year the product came out - such as Windows 98 or Office 2000 - Microsoft is trying to build enthusiasm among personal computer users, said Rob Enderle, a research fellow with Giga Information Group in Santa Clara, Calif.

"There's certainly a big push to try to re-excite the consumer side of the market," Enderle said.

Microsoft is to give out more details about Windows XP on Feb. 13 at the Experience Music Project in Seattle, a rock 'n roll, blues and jazz museum built by Microsoft co-founder and Jimi Hendrix fan Paul Allen. For now, however, it's promising the new products will be more powerful yet easier to use.

The new version of Office, expected to be released around June, will make it easier to integrate the software's different applications, including the word processor, spreadsheet and database, said Tom Bailey, the lead product manager for Office.

Office XP also will integrate Microsoft's Internet-based Hotmail and instant-messaging program MSN Messenger with Office's Outlook e-mail program, making it easier to move between the different services.

Bailey said Office also will be more reliable, and will include a new feature that automatically saves a document when a computer crashes.

The new version of Windows, expected to be released in the second half of this year, is the first operating system for small businesses and consumers that uses the more reliable software code of Windows 2000, which was designed for heavier-duty corporate and Internet users. Microsoft's older consumer version of Windows - the most recent of which is called Windows ME, for "Millennium Edition" - is based on the same code of Windows 95

and its successors.

Bill Gates, chairman and chief software architect for Microsoft, said both new products are important steps toward Microsoft's .NET initiative, which will be an Internet-based operating system. The company is touting its .NET platform as a way for people to share information among electronic devices, and other users, more efficiently.

With .NET, "instead of having individual applications on each device, users will get a rich experience that spans all their devices," Gates said in a statement.

This is the first time in several years that the company has jointly marketed its Office and Windows software, Enderle said. The strategy could be risky, he said, since personal and professional users have very different needs.

"It's an interesting dance," he said. "They're going to have to balance the kind of things a consumer market likes - things that are exciting, game applications, digital photography ... while the things the corporate market is looking for are security and reliability."

Microsoft's marketing may be hampered by technical glitches and hacker attacks that have plagued its own internal systems in recent weeks.

The company's internal e-mail system was recently beset with long delays, blamed on a test lab scenario gone awry.

Several days ago, hackers attacked equipment that directs Internet traffic, preventing many people from accessing Microsoft Web sites, including its home page, MSNBC.com and Hotmail.com. Earlier that week, Microsoft experienced a 22-hour shutdown of the same equipment, which it blamed on employee error.

#### Bills Would Keep Web Tax Moratorium

The Internet tax moratorium would be extended until 2006 and Internet access taxes banished altogether under bills introduced in the House and Senate on Thursday.

Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., who introduced the Senate version, said the extension is necessary to prevent a "crazy quilt" of tax structures in each state and locality. The current tax ban will expire Oct. 21.

"If that happens," Wyden said, "the World Wide Web is going to look like Dodge City before the marshals showed up."

Supported by Internet caucus co-chairmen Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., and Rep. Bob Goodlatte, R-Va., the bills target so-called "discriminatory" taxes, levies on Internet transactions that have no comparable version in the off-line world. Reps. Christopher Cox, R-Calif., and Goodlatte introduced the House bill.

President Bush endorsed this plan during his campaign, the congressmen noted, and several high-tech industry groups also issued statements supporting the measure.

Wyden said under the proposed law, Congress would conduct an "up or down vote" on whether to let states collect taxes on goods delivered from out-of-state companies. But he, Cox and Leahy said they didn't think the states should do so.

"Nobody is saying that states can't collect taxes," Leahy said, adding that states still benefit from Internet companies in their jurisdictions. "What we are saying, however, is don't drown the baby in the bathtub."

Neal Osten of the National Conference of State Legislatures said the states would be "very much opposed" to a permanent ban on Internet access charges, due to the rise in telecommunications companies "bundling" Internet access, telephone service and other utilities.

"It's a farce, it's a joke," Osten said. "It's just trying to cover for really screwing the states out of future revenues from telecommunications taxes."

The Senate bill does allow taxation on long-distance calls made through a computer - a practice becoming more and more popular - but Osten was skeptical on how states could recoup that money, since the calls are often free.

"If there are no charges to the consumer," Osten said, "how do you tax that?"

A congressional study in July found states and localities would lose \$300 million to \$3.8 billion in tax revenue in 2000 because of purchases made over the Internet.

~~~~~

Atari Online News, Etc. is a weekly publication covering the entire Atari community. Reprint permission is granted, unless otherwise noted at the beginning of any article, to Atari user groups and not for profit publications only under the following terms: articles must remain unedited and include the issue number and author at the top of each article reprinted. Other reprints granted upon approval of request. Send requests to: dpj@atarinews.org

No issue of Atari Online News, Etc. may be included on any commercial media, nor uploaded or transmitted to any commercial online service or internet site, in whole or in part, by any agent or means, without the expressed consent or permission from the Publisher or Editor of Atari Online News, Etc.

Opinions presented herein are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the staff, or of the publishers. All material herein is believed to be accurate at the time of publishing.